AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

28. A medical apparatus for imaging a wall of a body cavity in a patient by interacting with a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system which generates a magnetic field gradient and electromagnetic (EM) radiation externally from the patient and transmits the gradient and EM radiation into the patient and receives a response signal indicative of a resonant response from the patient, the apparatus comprising:

an antenna including an open conductor length configured to be inserted into the cavity and provide the response signal, based on the resonant response from a region of the patient closely proximate the antenna, to the MRI system; and

a controller coupled to the antenna and configured to receive the response signal to obtain an image of the cavity wall proximate the antenna.

29. The medical apparatus of claim 28 wherein the controller is configured to calculate antenna location by calculating an image of the antenna, antenna position, and antenna orientation.

30. The medical apparatus of claim 28 wherein the controller is configured to repeatedly measure, reconstruct and store the image to obtain an increased resolution image of the cavity wall.

31. The medical apparatus of claim 28 wherein the antenna is configured to be capacitively coupled to an EM field generated by the EM radiation.

32. The medical apparatus of claim 28 wherein the cavity is defined by vasculature in the patient and wherein the antenna is configured for insertion into and passage through the vasculature.

33. The medical apparatus of claim 32 wherein the antenna forms at least a portion of a guidewire configured for insertion into the vasculature for use in positioning of a catheter.

34. The medical apparatus of claim 28 wherein the MRI system includes a response signal receiver and processor and a control station, and wherein the controller is implemented as a part of the control station or processor.

35. The medical apparatus of claim 28 wherein the antenna includes a first elongate conductor having a portion thereof forming the open conductor length, and a second elongate conductor, the first and second elongate conductors extending to a proximal end of the antenna.

36. The medical apparatus of claim 35 wherein the first and second elongate conductors are coaxially arranged along at least a portion of a length thereof.

37. The medical apparatus of claim 35 wherein the first and second elongate conductors are separated by an insulative layer.

38. The medical apparatus of claim 35 wherein the first and second elongate conductors are formed as a twisted pair.

39. The medical apparatus of claim 35 wherein the first and second elongate conductors are generally linear and generally parallel to one another.

40. A method of generating an image of a wall of a body cavity in a patient, the method comprising:

inserting an antenna including an open conductor length into the cavity;

generating a magnetic field gradient and electromagnetic (EM) radiation external from the patient and transmitting the gradient and EM radiation into the patient;

transmitting a response signal, based on a detected resonant response from a region of the patient closely proximate the antenna, to a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) processor;

receiving the response signal at the MRI processor; and

obtaining an image of the cavity wall proximate the antenna based on the response signal.

41. The method of claim 40 wherein obtaining an image comprises:

repeatedly calculating antenna location.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein calculating antenna location comprises:

calculating an image of the antenna.

43. The method of claim 41 wherein calculating antenna location comprises:

calculating antenna position.

44. The method of claim 41 wherein calculating antenna location comprises:

calculating antenna orientation.

45. The method of claim 40 wherein obtaining an image comprises:

repeatedly measuring, reconstructing and storing the image to obtain an increased resolution image of the cavity wall.

46. The method of claim 40 wherein transmitting a response signal comprises:

capacitively coupling the antenna to an EM field generated by the EM radiation to detect the resonant response.

47. The method of claim 40 wherein the cavity is defined by vasculature in the patient and wherein inserting an antenna into the cavity comprises:

inserting the antenna into the vasculature; and

passing the antenna through the vasculature to a site to be imaged.

48. The method of claim 47 wherein the antenna is configured as a guidewire and further comprising:

positioning a catheter in the vasculature through use of the guidewire.

49. A method of generating an image of a blood vessel wall of a blood vessel in a patient, the method comprising:

inserting an antenna into the blood vessel;

passing the antenna through the blood vessel to a site to be imaged;

generating a magnetic field gradient and electromagnetic (EM) radiation external from the patient and transmitting the gradient and EM radiation into the patient;

transmitting a response signal, based on a detected resonant response from a region of the patient closely proximate the antenna, to a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

processor;

receiving the response signal at the MRI processor; and

obtaining an image of the blood vessel wall proximate the antenna based on the response signal.

50. A medical apparatus for imaging a blood vessel wall of a blood vessel in a patient by interacting with a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system which generates a magnetic field gradient and electromagnetic (EM) radiation external from the patient and transmits the gradient and EM radiation into the patient and receives a response signal indicative of a resonant response from the patient, the apparatus comprising:

an antenna configured to be inserted into the blood vessel and passed along the blood vessel to a site to be imaged and to provide the response signal, based on the resonant response from a region of the patient closely proximate the antenna, to the MRI system; and

a controller coupled to the antenna and configured to receive the response signal and repeatedly calculate antenna location to obtain an image of the blood vessel wall proximate the antenna.

51. The medical apparatus of claim 50 wherein the antenna comprises an open conductor length.

52. The medical apparatus of claim 51 wherein the antenna includes a first elongate conductor having a portion thereof forming the open conductor length, and a second elongate conductor, the first and second elongate conductors extending to a proximal end of the antenna.

53. The medical apparatus of claim 50 wherein the antenna is configured to be capacitively coupled to an EM field generated by the EM radiation.

54. A medical apparatus for imaging a body cavity wall of a body cavity in a patient by interacting with a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system which generates a magnetic field gradient and electromagnetic (EM) radiation external from the patient and transmits the gradient and EM radiation into the patient and receives a response signal indicative of a resonant response from the patient, the apparatus comprising:

an MRI antenna configured to be inserted into the body cavity and passed along the body cavity to a site to be imaged and to provide the response signal, based on the resonant response from a region of the patient closely proximate the antenna, to the MRI system.

55. The medical apparatus of claim 54 wherein the body cavity is a blood vessel and further comprising:

a controller coupled to the antenna and configured to receive the response signal and repeatedly calculate antenna location to obtain an image of the blood vessel wall proximate the antenna.

56. A method of generating an image of a wall of a body cavity in a patient, the method comprising:

inserting a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) antenna into the body cavity;

passing the MRI antenna through the body cavity to a site to be imaged; and

obtaining an MRI image of the body cavity wall proximate the antenna.

57. The method of claim 56 wherein obtaining an image comprises:

generating a magnetic field gradient and electromagnetic (EM) radiation external from the patient and transmitting the gradient and EM radiation into the patient;

transmitting a response signal, based on a detected resonant response from a region of the patient closely proximate the antenna, to an MRI processor;

receiving the response signal at the MRI processor; and

calculating antenna location based on the response signal.

58. The method of claim 57 wherein calculating antenna location comprises:

repeatedly calculating antenna location.

59. The method of claim 56 wherein obtaining an MRI image comprises:

calculating an image of the antenna.

60. The method of claim 56 wherein obtaining an MRI image comprises:

calculating antenna position.

61. The method of claim 56 wherein obtaining an MRI image comprises:

calculating antenna orientation.

62. The method of claim 56 wherein the body cavity is a blood vessel and obtaining an MRI image comprises:

repeatedly measuring, reconstructing and storing the image to obtain an increased resolution image of the blood vessel wall.

63. The method of claim 57 wherein transmitting a response signal comprises:

capacitively coupling the antenna to an EM field generated by the EM radiation to detect the resonant response.

64. The method of claim 56 wherein the body cavity is defined by vasculature and the antenna is configured as a guidewire and further comprising:

positioning a catheter in the vasculature through use of the guidewire.

65. A medical apparatus for imaging a wall of a body cavity in a patient by interacting with a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system which generates a magnetic field gradient and electromagnetic (EM) radiation and transmits the gradient and EM radiation into the patient and receives a response signal indicative of a resonant response from the patient, the apparatus comprising:

an antenna including an open conductor length configured to be inserted into the cavity and provide the response signal, based on the resonant response from a region of the patient closely proximate the antenna, to the MRI system wherein the antenna includes a first elongate conductor having a portion thereof forming the open conductor length, and a second elongate conductor, the first and second elongate conductors extending to a proximal end of the antenna; and

a controller coupled to the antenna and configured to receive the response signal to obtain an image of the cavity wall proximate the antenna.

66. The medical apparatus of claim 65 wherein the first and second elongate conductors are coaxially arranged along at least a portion of a length thereof.

67. The medical apparatus of claim 65 wherein the first and second elongate conductors are separated by an insulative layer.

68. The medical apparatus of claim 65 wherein the first and second elongate conductors are formed as a twisted pair.

69. The medical apparatus of claim 65 wherein the first and second elongate conductors are generally linear and generally parallel to one another.